



Retirees in the Spokane area meet for breakfast monthly at Frontier West Restaurant. Among those at the April gathering were Tom Day, Mrs. Vern Green, Art Harlow, Burl Knauts, Harvey Magnuson, Blanche O'Connell, Sylvia Russell, Bernie and Twillawood Sebb, Mary Thiede, George and Doris Twiggs, Ed and Pearl Votava and Harold Wickline.



Photos by Mary Thiede

Married 71 years, Nick and Zelma Timmers (right) still attend monthly breakfast meetings in Spokane.

Out to lunch bunch meets in metro area

Several small groups of retirees get together frequently to socialize in the Portland and Vancouver areas. But one larger group meets regularly for lunch. It's fairly young, has a little different purpose and isn't just for retirees.

The Out to Lunch Bunch, got started in 1994, says Jim Pachot who retired about that time. "A few of the recent retirees from engineering got together once a month at the Rose and Thistle Pub at Northeast 24th and Broadway," Pachot says. From there, the gathering evolved to include anyone from BPA, retired or still working. And meetings moved to a regular time – the first Fridays of each month.

Last year, the group met at the Red Robin restaurant near the Lloyd Center. But last December the folks who attended decided to move the luncheon to Vancouver. It's still held the first Friday of the month, but now it's at the Dragon King Restaurant in Hazel Dell, located on 78th St. a few blocks east of I-5.

Pachot helps coordinate the monthly gathering. He puts out notices and makes sure the meeting place is ready. The group doesn't have a formal structure or any restrictions on who can attend. "It's always been open to anyone who wants to come," Pachot says.

"Having a mix of retirees and present employees allows the retirees

to keep up with what's going on at BPA," he says. "And it often provides the present employees with information from the old-timers that may – or may not – help them in their jobs at BPA."

Pachot says "we add people to our e-mail list as they express interest in the luncheon. A person's position or rank makes no difference." He says the group sends out a yearly schedule in December. At present about 60 people get reminders.

Anyone who would like to be put on the e-mail list for the Out to Lunch Bunch can contact Pachot by e-mail at jjpachot@transport.com. ◀

Keeping in touch is a gem for retirees

Golf groups meet the same day each week or month. "Investment clubs" – the kind that use a deck of cards and have low stakes – meet weekly. Union meetings, bowling outings and breakfasts. BPA retirees regularly get together in groups with former colleagues.

Some groups have been meeting since the 1960s and earlier. The new people who join them after retiring keep them going. And those are just regular recurring events.

Other things, like 50th anniversaries, kids' weddings and birthday bashes, figure in the picture as well. Pat Zimmer of regional relations attended the St. Patrick's Day lunch and reunion this year. She visited with several people and says, "Virtually everyone I talked to had a story or an example of keeping in touch with old friends from BPA."

Indeed, that's what most of the BPA-connected events in retirement seem to be about. Keeping in touch with old friends. When it's time to stop working and enjoy life more, most folks can leave their jobs behind but not the friendships they have built over the years.

It seems like one more nice thing to look forward to. Right alongside things like sleeping later in the morning, going places when you want to at the drop of a hat and taking naps in the middle of the afternoon.

If this doesn't sound appealing to some readers – well, you're not there yet. But for many of us closer to that time, it's a sparkling gem we have our eyes on and are about to scoop up. ◀



Spokane women at the monthly lunch posed for a photo early this year. Pictured are retirees (Left to right, front row) Maureen Karlin, Mary Thiede, Sue Matsui and Jean Johnson. In the back row are Mickey Alferez, Rose Ann Potesky, Lily Sorenson, Cathy Worstell, Mary Ann Warren, Sharon King, Joyce Fury and Helen O'Connor. Some regulars who didn't attend that day are Louise Ames, Kathleen Barbour, Lidwina Erickson, Patty Jensen, Ann Ozuna, Sylvia Russell and Mary Ann Tupper. (A friend snapped the photo.)

Retirees in the Spokane area like to keep in touch. So much so that many regularly attend a monthly breakfast. In addition, about two dozen women retirees also attend a monthly luncheon.

It's not quite right to call the breakfast at the Frontier West Restaurant a "meeting." And it's not really a club. No one presides over the gathering. No one calls the group to order. No one holds any formal office. There isn't an organization to run or business to transact. And there are no employees, managers or members.

Just folks who used to work at BPA and who like to keep in touch. Many were friends in their working

years. Most, who worked in what for years was the Upper Columbia Area, knew each other at work. The field areas are much smaller and

people get to know each other more, says Mary Thiede who retired in 1986.

So as they have retired, most have wanted to keep their ties – on a more casual level.

Thiede says that 20 to 30 folks attend the breakfasts held the first Tuesday of each month.

They don't have an agenda. They get together "mostly to see old friends that we worked with," Thiede says. "We just like to have fun and laugh and joke," she says.

The Spokane retirees have been meeting monthly like this since before most can remember – or will tell. The same is true for the retired BPA women's group that meets monthly for lunch.

Lily Sorenson retired in 1995 and says about 20 women attend the lunches frequently. They take place on the last Monday of the month. But the women add an interesting twist. They don't have a specific place for their lunches each month.

Instead, the women take turns picking the place they will meet for lunch each month. So, besides dining right in Spokane, the women retirees might meet at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Or Post Falls, Idaho, where Sorenson lives.

As with the monthly breakfasts, the women like to get together just to share news, stories and laughter in good company. And they'll probably keep doing so, as long as BPA continues to serve the Northwest area that they call home. ◀

Spokane retirees keep in touch

May anniversaries

35 years

Leo W. Decandido, Lead Electrical Engineering Tech, Scheduling and Estimating, Vancouver

30 years

Michael A. Jeffries, Duplicating and Direct Print Foreman, Printing, Portland

Paul D. Hagewood, Computer Specialist, Operation Services, Portland

Barbara L. Zufelt, Relocation Technician, Disbursement Operations, Portland

David E. Lundeen, Substation Operator, Relief, Substation Operations, Redmond

Vern W. Cimmery, Computer Specialist, Software design & Maintenance, Portland

Linda L. Perkins, Substation Operations Specialist, Dittmer Dispatch, Vancouver

Neal E. Meisner, Realty Specialist, Real Estate Field Services, Portland

25 years

Jeannine D. Hill, Personal Assistant, Shared Services, Portland

Rita Guzman, Computer Specialist, Server Services, Portland

Nicholas Henderson, Environmental Specialist, Technical and Regional Services, Olympia

Ralph Fair, Safety and Occupational Health Manager, Safety Vancouver

Stanley S. Kusaka, Public Utilities Specialist, Interchange Scheduling, Portland

Ottie E. Nabors, Public Utilities Specialist, Business Strategy Development, Portland

Dennis M. Oster, Customer Account Executive, Bulk Marketing and Transmission, Portland

Malcolm L. Mackey, Substation Operator, Substation Operations, Chemawa

Glenn R. Martinez, Facility Management Specialist, Facility Maintenance, Vancouver

Jonathan D. Schwarz, System Protection Control Craftsman, Control and Protection, Vancouver

20 years

Gayle L. Snoen, Program Analyst, Telecommunication Services, Portland

Stephen J. Goins, Labor Relations Specialist, Human Resources, Diversity and EEO, Portland

Janet L. Rickman, Public Utilities Specialist, Eastern Power Business Area, Spokane

Mark H. Ebberts, Economist, Power Products, Pricing & Rates, Portland

Darryl C. Schellhammer, System Protection Control Craftsman, SPC, The Dalles

William K. Murray, Materials Handler Foreman, Material Handling & Transportation, Vancouver

Kerry H. Bilyeu, Electrical Engineering Technician, Control and Protection, Portland

Wendelin H. Mueller, Structural Engineer, Transmission Development, Portland

Amanda L. Hickman, Computer Specialist, Technical Operations, Vancouver

10 years

Arthur D. Benedetti White, Computer Specialist, Server Services, Portland

Patricia Picariello, Materials Handler, Material Handling & Transportation, Vancouver

Robert D. Schoenberg, System Dispatcher, Dittmer Dispatch, Vancouver

Corrections of service

The April Circuit listed two times of service wrong under the anniversaries. Both appeared under the 25-year service date but should have been 30 years of service. They are **Dennis A. Chabot**, chief substation operator at Malin, and **Kathleen L. Suckow**, budget analyst at Portland.

Retirements

Victoria P. English, Supervisory Public Utilities Specialist, PBL, Energy Efficiency, retires May 1 with 34 years service.

Lee E. Johnson, Public Utilities Specialist, PBL, Communications & Liaison, retires May 1 with 33 years service.

Jack Kiley, Manager, General Services, retires May 1 with 31 years service.

David A. Phelps, Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, retires May 31 with 37 years service.